

## WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A data processing system suitable for use as a client device in a network, the system including a general purpose processor and memory accessible to the general purpose processor,  
5 comprising:

a service processor communicatively coupled to the general purpose processor;

10 computer code means for responding to a boot event by requesting boot information from a network device;

computer code means for determining that the boot information request expired unsuccessfully and, responsive thereto, for requesting the boot information from the service processor;

15 computer code means for responding to the successful retrieval of the boot information from the service processor by using the retrieved boot information to establish a network connection to a file transfer server; and

20 computer code means for using the file transfer server connection to download an operating system image from the file transfer server and code means for booting the operating system image to install an operating system.

2. The system of claim 1, wherein the file transfer server is a TFTP compliant server and  
25 wherein the service processor includes storage containing boot information including an IP address for the TFTP server and the path and name of an operating system image on the TFTP server.

3. The system of claim 1, wherein the code means for responding to the boot event includes code  
30 means for responding to the boot event by performing a DHCP broadcast to determine the presence on the network of a DHCP compliant server.

4. The system of claim 3, wherein the code means for determining that the boot information request terminated unsuccessfully includes code means for receiving a network timeout message corresponding to the DHCP broadcast.

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5. The system of claim 1, wherein the code means for responding to the boot event comprises PXE compliant code means.

6. The system of claim 1, further comprising a deployment server having access to a table containing the boot information and further configured to provide the boot information to the service processor.

7. The system of claim 6, wherein the deployment server is configured to provide the boot information to the service processor in response to a timeout event following a DHCP broadcast by the system.

8. The system of claim 7, wherein the boot information table includes a list of IP address assignable by the deployment server to the client.

9. A service to permit a customer to install an operating system on a remote client via a network, comprising:

enabling a client device to respond to a boot event by making a first attempt to obtain an IP address via the network;

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enabling the client device to respond to the unsuccessful termination of the first attempt by making a second attempt to obtain the IP address from a service processor of the client system;

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enabling the client to respond to the successful completion of the second attempt, by using the obtained IP address to establish a connection with a file transfer server;

enabling the client to use the file transfer server connection to retrieve an operating system image from the file transfer server and boot the operating system image.

5     10. The service of claim 9, wherein making the first attempt to obtain an IP address comprises issuing a DHCP discover.

11. The service of claim 9, wherein enabling the client to establish a connection with the file transfer server includes providing the service processor with an IP address of file transfer server.

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12. The service of claim 11, wherein enabling the client to use the file transfer server to obtain an operating system image includes providing the service processor with a path and name of files needed to boot the operating system.

15     13. The service of claim 9, further comprising, enabling a deployment server on the network to provide PXE information, including IP address information, to the service processor.

14. The service of claim 13, wherein the deployment server pre-configures the service processor with the PXE information wherein the information is installed on the service processor when the  
20     client is booted.

15. The service of claim 13, wherein the deployment server is configured to provide the PXE information to the service processor at run time.

25     16. A computer program product comprising a set of computer executable instructions for installing an operating system to a remote system on a network, the instructions being stored on a computer readable medium, comprising:

30             computer code means for responding to a client system being booted by obtaining an IP address from a service processor of the client system;

computer code means for obtaining an IP address for a file server and a file path and name for an operating system image on the file server from the service processor;

5 computer code means for using the obtained IP addresses and file path and name to transfer the operating system image from the file server to the client system.

10 17. The computer program product of claim 16, wherein the code means for obtaining the IP address from the service processor are invoked prior to the client system issuing a DHCP discover to obtain its IP address.

18. The computer program product of claim 16, wherein the code means for obtaining the IP address from the service processor are invoked responsive to timeout following the client system issuing a DHCP discover.

15 19. The computer program product of claim 16, further comprising code means of the service processor for obtaining the IP address and file path and name from a deployment server.

20 20. The computer program product of claim 19, wherein the code means of the service processor are responsive to a request from the client system following a boot event such that the IP address and file path and name are obtained from the deployment server at run time.